

chest, broad back and well-wooled belly. The very choicest of the flock should be saved, even in the very face of tempting offers from breeders. To sell the pick of the flock to the butcher where it is intended to continue breeding is a crime that ought to be punished by law. Where there is not adequate room to winter the lambs for sale, they should be disposed of before its approach, even when sold at a low price, as sheep will not bear crowding. Two boards, 1 inch by six inches, nailed together at right angles make a sufficient trough for feeding in the fields when supported on legs similar to those used in the construction of a saw horse, used by the ordinary cutter of cordwood. A strip should be nailed across the bottom of the feet even with the ground to keep the trough from being upset.

### Making the Most of Opportunities.

(TO THE YOUNG MEN OF THE FARM.)

Mr. C. H. F. Major, the author of the stirring and exceedingly pointed papers on the subject, "To be or not to be, to act or not to act," which appear in the August and September issues of the JOURNAL, makes the following pregnant statement in the department treating of agriculture and education. "Most of the matter of this paper was thought out between the plough-handles and put in shape when work was done." The brain-power that is wasted on the farm because it is not utilized after the plan adopted by Mr. Major, who can estimate? The magnitude of the loss, which clever finance minister shall put it into figures? Indeed, it cannot be reduced to figures, for the most precious part of it—the deprivation of that deep, true enjoyment which comes from mental culture, is of a nature so subtle that even the mathematical brain of a finance minister cannot grasp it. The human mind is like a machine which feeds itself. Except it may be on its spiritual side, it is the main-spring of its own enjoyments; and like the produce of a cultivated field, these are usually in exact proportion to the care bestowed in its cultivation.

We have heard it remarked that the truest happiness in rural life was to be found in the cot of the farm servant, who, after his day's work is done, gathering with others of his guild in a little knot or group, wile away the evening hours with simple neighborhood talk, quite unconcerned as to whether there shall be either rain or sun to-morrow.

We have read somewhere in reference to the distinctions between the different forms of life, although we cannot give the exact language, that while vegetables grow and live, animals grow and live and feel. Does not the next step in the ascending scale bring us to the farm laborer, as already referred to, utterly unconcerned as to whether his condition will ever be better. Of him we may say that while he has grown, and while he lives and feels, he also eats and sleeps—attributes that do not yet lift him above the lower animals, for they do likewise. Like some of them, too, he labors much after the fashion of a machine, moving as it is moved. There is this difference, however, that while they apparently tell no tales, he finds his deepest enjoyment in canvassing the petty locals of the neighborhood. Who will say, who dare say, that this is the goal of mere earthly bliss, that the highest plane of human happiness lies so very near the border line of the lower orders of plant life, that we can scarcely tell in many instances where it is? While man's physical powers are susceptible of improvement from the cradle to matured life, his mental powers are capable of expansion from the cradle to the grave, and this fact in the absence of any evidence to the contrary is a presumptive proof that they may still ex-

pand in the eternity beyond. But it is a law of life that the moment progression ceases, retrogression commences; so that the intelligent being who does not continually try to improve his intellectual nature, is suicidal to the best interests thereof.

Nay, if this were the goal of intellectual bliss, may we reach it the last. And "may we reach it the last" impromptu comes the echo from a thousand of the youthful followers of the plough. Like air and water, the properties of the human mind are wonderfully expansive. So much so, that who can make himself believe, even in the absence of proof to the contrary, that these powers of expansion shall have exhausted themselves within the narrow limit that men call *time*? Nay, will not the avenue into the unseen be but an opening into the boundless realm where intellectual development will be gloriously unfettered, and where intellectual improvement will commence an eternal forward march?

But laying aside this mightiest spur to human effort, and confining ourselves to arguments shut in by the ancient gates of time, what abundant reason is there that farmers' sons should think out profitable problems between the plough handles, and put them in shape during those seasons when the birds have sought their perch.

*Agricultural representation* in the Legislature calls for it. The clamor for this is a favorite theme of demagogues on the hustings in every rural district. The very fact that there is room for such a clamor is a stigma on the farming profession. If the merchants raised the clamor that they were not sufficiently represented, we would take a similar position; we would hold its existence as a stigma on mercantile life. If a sufficient number of farmers had so cultivated their minds, that on the platform they could hold even a lawyer at bay, they would certainly be elected as the representatives of the people in rural districts in preference to the other. Farmers should not be blamed for electing a capable professional man in preference to an incapable farmer. The men of no calling would like to choose a legislator who, though he might be successful as a money-maker on a farm, would be nothing more than an old woman in the halls of the legislature. When a larger number of our farmers engage in the working out of problems while following the plough, and putting them in shape in the evening, we shall have less and less of the professional element representing us in the Legislature. Many of the farmers who now represent us are men of this class. They have not reached their present positions by some lucky revolution of the wheel of accident. We venture to assert that, if the whole story of their lives were known, many and many a day while following the plough, when the very air was resounding with the song of singing birds (which they heard not), they were thinking out some useful subject which they put in shape when other farmers were talking by the half hour about nothing, or, if possible, *something less*.

Ye former fathers, whose sons have a predilection for putting their thoughts on paper, do not be hard with them for the little time they spend in this way. What though they do for you a half hour's less labor in the day? Many a man, whose aspirations lie very near the border-land of vegetable life, can make that up for you at a comparatively small outlay. Give the boys a chance. Far too few of the entire number have fallen in love with the pen to justify turning cold water upon their efforts. We say again, give your sons upon the farm who love the pen a chance, and it is not at all improbable that you will soon find them where every farmer father must love to see his boy,

standing high on some Laurentian height, looking down upon the multitude who labor in the valley.

The wants of the *agricultural press* demand it. Take up an ordinary agricultural newspaper, examine it carefully, and you will find that most of the articles are either clippings, or what is more contemptible; a re-hash of clippings palmed off upon an innocently unsuspecting public as the shoddy store palms off old clothes for new, which have merely undergone a polishing-up process. Wherefore is this dearth of matter? Not because of the *poverty* of the subject. The Alexandrian library itself might be outnumbered in the volumes that could be written on agriculture. Nearly every practical science has its foundation or cope-stone in this infinitely grandest of the sciences. Nor because of the *needs* of the subject. Amazing progress has been made of late years in the march of improvement, but this is as nothing in comparison, with the triumphs yet to be.

So long as hand labor has to be done, discovery in the line of agricultural improvement will be an unfinished problem. Then there are the rich experiences of practical farmers going down with them to the grave like the crops of an ungathered harvest, because there is none who may chronicle them for the benefit of those who shall live after. The history of our flocks and herds as yet but lives mainly in a tradition more uncertain than that of the bards and druids. Defects in the practice of whole sections abound, because that which is more advanced in others has never penetrated the darkness. And even the foremost of our scientists have scarcely wet their foot-prints in the search for diamonds on the shores of this unbounded sea.

Nor does it arise from lack of *inherent brain-power* among the farmers. Nothing of the kind. They have more of it than would drive the machinery of the nation, though the professions we can bound hand and foot, if they would but use it. Notwithstanding the tremendous drain that is drawn off by the professions, there is a rich supply left; but too often it is left as farmers frequently leave their implements—outside—to corrode and decay. Like the organic properties of deep rich soils, it is inert, never having been disturbed by the subsoil ploughshare of a laudable ambition. Like the hibernating squirrel lying dead in its nest, they feel none of the awakening influences of a spring sun calling upon them to arouse and get ready for the labors of summer.

The great educator of the farmer in the arts of his profession is the agricultural press. True, other newspapers do something—yea, a good deal, but only in so far as they dwell upon agriculture. It does not assist the farmer in his work to be told of an awful murder in New York, or even to know which candidate has got a place in the newly elected council. Farmers themselves are slow indeed to perceive these distinctions, but a brighter morn is breaking.

It is exceedingly important, then, that agricultural papers be well sustained. We do not now speak of a strong subscription list, but of the *abundance, the originality and superiority of the contributions that should come from the farmers themselves*, and things as they are, this cannot be, without the sons of the soil think profoundly while at their daily avocations, and put their thoughts in shape during intervals of labor, owing to the intimacy of the relation between sound theory and practice.

We understand perfectly the strength of will which such a course requires; indeed, so much so that very many will not give it. They would rather lie down in the grave content with the sentence upon their stone, "There lived a man," to perpetuate for a little